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RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCA, L/NPV, IO/MPR,
SECDEF FOR OSD/GSA/CN,CP>
JOINT STAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC
COMMERCE FOR BIS (BROWN, DENYER AND CRISTOFARO)
NSC FOR LUTES
WINPAC FOR WALTER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [CWC](#)
SUBJECT: CWC: THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF OPCW NATIONAL
AUTHORITIES, 27-29 NOVEMBER 2009

This is CWC-70-09

SUMMARY

¶1. (U) The eleventh annual meeting of the National Authorities was held at the headquarters of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague on 27-29 November 2009. As in previous meetings, this one focused on providing those National Authorities that are working on establishing functioning offices with the basic tools for communication and information transfer with the OPCW. A highlight of this meeting was the presentation by the Chinese government of ten new computers to eight African National Authorities and two related labs in Africa to assist them in communicating with the OPCW and submitting a national declaration.

¶2. (U) During the presentation by the Asian group on their regional National Authority meeting in Viet Nam in October 2009, the chairman personally thanked the United States for its presentation on chemical safety and security and the continuing outreach effort by representatives from Washington (ISN/CB and CTR) in providing support to other National Authorities in the region.

¶3. (U) On the margins of the meeting, representatives from the Portuguese and Indian National Authorities approached Delreps with requests for assistance in developing industry regulations for submission of CWC declarations and providing legal models to establish criminal penalties for non-compliance with the Convention. End Summary.

NATIONAL AUTHORITIES MEETING

¶4. (U) The eleventh annual meeting of National Authorities was chaired by the Director of the

International Cooperation and Assistance Division and consisted of three segments spaced over three days: a segment for presentations and round-table discussions of basic themes, such as organization of a National Authority office and declarable Article VI activities (Activities Not Prohibited Under the Chemical Weapons Convention); a segment for regional perspectives on themes such as global anti-terrorism efforts and safety and security at chemical plants; and a segment for bilateral meetings of National Authorities with Technical Secretariat (TS) officials. The United States did not participate in the last segment.

15. (U) Director-General Rogelio Pffirter welcomed the National Authorities, emphasizing the importance of effective National Authorities for implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). He stated that they should be alert and flexible in the face of a shift from chemical weapons destruction to more industry inspections and potential changes to the verification regime resulting from changes in science and technology. He noted that the Technical Secretariat (TS) was available to provide capacity building, help in national implementation, and that there is a special Program for Africa which has been assisted by donations from States Parties (SPs).

16. (U) A special closing ceremony was arranged by the OPCW for the presentation by the Chinese government of ten new computers to eight African

National Authorities and two CWC-related labs in Africa to assist them in communicating with the OPCW and submitting their national declarations. The ceremony was well-attended with both the Ambassador of China and the OPCW Director-General presenting the computers to the corresponding ambassador of each African country. It generated a well-publicized press opportunity and helped with the OPCW's push towards full compliance of CWC requirements by National Authorities.

THEMATIC SEGMENT

17. (U) The entire first day was dedicated to sharing experiences in implementation of the Convention by National Authorities. The OPCW Legal Advisor provided a presentation recapping the legal bases for National Authorities in the Convention and discussed the need for national implementation of the CWC by all States Parties. He noted that States Parties located their National Authorities in a variety of different ministries, about half using their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, National Authorities have to deal with issues not usually handled by MFAs and may have coordination problems with their chemical industries. A round-table discussion followed where participants shared experiences, including Uganda, which has no implementing legislation and is under tight budget constraints on accomplishing compliance with the Convention; and Albania which has budget and staffing problems.

18. (U) The second half of the day dealt with the problem of identification of declarable Article VI sites and collecting and submitting their associated declarations. A roundtable discussion by several National Authorities (Canada, South Africa, Iran, Singapore, and Pakistan) offered their approaches to determining which industry sites would come under Article VI declaration requirements. Approaches included use of questionnaires, outreach seminars and public

information sources. Canada also gave details of its approach to Schedule 2 and 3 transfer discrepancies, a problem encountered by most National Authorities.

INFORMATIVE SEGMENT

¶9. (U) The second day was dedicated to regional perspectives of the national implementation process of the CWC. A representative from the Australian Counter-Terrorism Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, made a presentation on the Asia Pacific Seminar on Chemical Safety and Security to Counter Terrorism held in Canberra in June 2009. Unfortunately, his talk focused on how the seminar was organized, and gave little information about outcomes. The OPCW Director of Special Projects then described the OPCW's contribution to global counter-terrorism activities. Of note in his presentation was the trend by the OPCW and various State Parties to utilize Article X (Assistance and Protection Against Chemical Weapons) as the part of the Convention most suitable for discussion of counter-terrorism activities. To that end, the Iranian National Authority representative made an intervention asking for help from developed countries in establishing regional centers to pre-qualify equipment and supplies for contingency use in the event of a terrorist attack on a State Party to the Convention.

¶10. (U) The OPCW Legal Advisor then reviewed the status of Article VII implementation (National Implementation Measures) and noted that 126 States Parties have sought and received help from the TS. Round-table discussion followed where regional perspectives were presented by Mexico for the Latin American Group (GRULAC), Morocco for Africa, Pakistan for Asia, and Bulgaria for Eastern Europe. The representatives for GRULAC, Asia and Africa all indicated interest in pursuing assistance from other States Parties through Article X implementation. During the presentation by the Asian group on their National Authority meeting in Viet Nam in October 2009, the Pakistani chairman personally thanked the United States for its presentation at the meeting on chemical safety and security and the continuing outreach effort in providing support to other National Authorities in the region.

¶11. (U) During the lunch break, the TS arranged for one of the participants from the previous Other Chemical Production Facilities (OCPF) workshop to provide his presentation on a technical perspective on the OCPF regime that was not given at the workshop because of time constraints. With a very small audience and no official language interpretation, the Iranian National Authority representative intervened during the question and answer session at the end with a prepared statement requesting State Parties to push for the termination of the Australia Group and its associated trade restrictions. Because of the informal setting and lack of time, no comments were made in response to the Iranian statement.

¶12. (U) On the margins of the meeting, a representative from India approached Delrep and asked for assistance in developing industry regulations for submission of CWC declarations and providing models of criminal penalties for non-compliance with the Convention. His concern was with counter-terrorism support, which he said was

lacking in his country, and the fact that his National Authority office has no legal basis to prosecute violators of the Convention with regard to chemical transfers. The U.S. National Authority will contact the Indian National Authority to provide any assistance that may be requested. A request for this type of assistance was also made by the Portuguese National Authority that has had similar problems establishing industry regulations.

¶13. (U) BEIK SENDS.
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